



News Release

For immediate release: September 9, 2014

(14-131)

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Suicide rates in Washington rise slightly

Suicide is Washington's eighth leading cause of death

OLYMPIA — Three people take their own lives in Washington each day on average, and suicide remains among the top causes of death in our state. Rates of suicides and suicide attempts went up slightly in Washington from 2006 to 2012.

Suicide is Washington's eighth leading cause of death – second in the 15-24-year-old age group. The state ranks 21st nationally in suicides. Thousands of other Washington residents are hospitalized each year after trying to hurt themselves.

During [National Suicide Prevention Week](#) Sept. 8-14, the hopeful message is that suicide is avoidable.

The Department of Health works with state and private organizations to promote suicide prevention education and resources. This includes training on how to recognize signs and how to intervene. The agency also supports youth suicide prevention coalitions, compiles and provides data and statistics, and publishes information through newsletters. Work is underway on a new suicide prevention plan.

Most people considering suicide give warnings. If you notice someone talking about wanting to die, looking for a way to kill themselves, or having no reason to live, immediately call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-8255, or a mental health professional.

It's important to pay attention when people talk about feeling trapped, or about being a burden to others. Indicators may include increasing alcohol or drug use, acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly, sleeping too little or too much, withdrawing or feeling isolated, showing rage or talking about seeking revenge, and displaying extreme mood swings.

Staying connected with others is a main factor in preventing suicides, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Talking about suicide doesn't increase the risk of someone killing themselves. Talk openly and freely, and listen without being judgmental. Offer hope of alternatives. Make sure someone doesn't have the means to commit suicide if they show signs of wanting to hurt themselves.

Suicide prevention works. People can and do put suicidal thoughts behind them. Effective programs and services exist in [communities throughout Washington](#).

The [Department of Health website](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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